

WHAT IS CLAIMED

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1. A portable method of real-time identification and verification of the identity of a person comprising the following steps:
- providing a portable handheld device;
  - capturing an image of a fingerprint;
  - processing the fingerprint image to determine if the finger print image meets a predetermined quality level;
  - storing fingerprint images that satisfy the predetermined fingerprint quality level in temporary data storage of the portable handheld device;
  - transmitting fingerprint images that satisfy the predetermined fingerprint quality level to a central processor for processing;
  - processing the transmitted fingerprint images to determine if there is matching fingerprint information in central data storage;
  - receiving data from the central processor relating to the processed fingerprint image; and
  - displaying the data received on a display of the portable handheld device.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing a fingerprint image includes the steps of:
- positioning the finger on a finger receiving surface of the portable device; and
  - scanning a slap imprint of the finger.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the finger receiving surface captures fingerprint images in varying illumination conditions ranging from bright sunlight to total darkness.

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4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing a fingerprint image includes the steps of :

positioning the finger on a finger receiving surface of the portable device; and  
scanning a rolled fingerprint.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing a fingerprint comprises scanning a latent imprint.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of capturing a fingerprint image includes the step of determining the image quality of the fingerprint captured.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting fingerprint images includes the steps of:

a wireless transmission from the portable handheld device to a wireless mobile unit for processing; and

wireless transmission from the wireless mobile unit to the central processor for comparison of the fingerprint images transmitted to a plurality of previously stored images to immediately determine identity and background information on individuals being fingerprinted in the field.

8. The method of claim 1, including the step of capturing a facial image and transmitting the captured facial image to a central processor, wherein the step of transmitting the facial image to the central processor includes the steps of:

a wireless transmission from the portable handheld device to a wireless mobile unit for processing; and

wireless transmission from the wireless mobile unit to the central processor for comparison of the facial images transmitted to a plurality of previously stored



14. The method of claim 1 including the step of capturing geographical position and direction data.

15. The method of claim 1 including the step of transmitting a signal for emergency assistance.

16. A portable apparatus for identification and verification of a fingerprint comprising:

a housing having an ergonomic handle formed thereon that provides for one hand operation and command of all the functions of the apparatus;

a user interface, attached to the housing for data input, display and receipt, the user interface including at least a finger-receiving surface for receiving images of a fingerprint and buttons for data entry and command execution;

a sensor positioned within the housing and electrically connected to the user interface for capturing the fingerprint images from the finger-receiving surface;

a processor electrically connected to the sensor for processing the fingerprint images captured to determine if the fingerprint images captured meet a minimum fingerprint quality level; and

a transmitter, electrically connected to the processor for transmitting fingerprint images to a central processor for identification and verification.

17. The portable apparatus of claim 16, wherein the portable handheld device further includes a module operating within the processor that provides for the capture and enhancement of the fingerprint image prior to transmittal.

18. The portable apparatus of claim 16, wherein the portable handheld device further includes data storage electrically connected to the sensor for storing the fingerprint images captured that meet a minimum fingerprint quality level.

19. The portable apparatus of claim 16, including a removable baffle for preventing illumination sources to interfere with capturing the fingerprint on the finger-receiving surface.

